

REMARKS

Claims 1-14 are currently pending in the Application. Claims 1, 4, and 13 have been amended with this Response.

Claim Rejections Under 35 U.S.C. §102(a)

Claims 1-6 and 8-13 have been rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(a) as being anticipated by et al. U.S. Patent No. 6,502,360 to Carr (hereinafter referred to as “Carr”). Applicant respectfully traverse.

Applicant’s amended claim 1 recites *inter alia*:

“positioning an individual piece of energy absorbing material to discretely cover each individual fastener of said fasteners,” and

Applicant’s amended claims 4 and 13 recites *inter alia*:

“an individual piece of energy absorbing material positioned to discretely cover each individual fastener of said at least one fasteners.”

Applicant respectfully asserts that Carr does not teach *an individual piece of* energy absorbing material discretely positioned over each of said at least one fasteners. Instead, referring to Figure 1 in particular, Carr teaches an energy absorbing layer 20 that covers multiple fasteners 16. As such, the energy absorbing material 20 of Carr is not taught to individually and discretely cover each individual fastener. Thus, Carr does not teach every element of Applicant’s claims 1, 4, and 13.

Accordingly, for at least the reasons set forth hereinabove, Applicant respectfully submits that amended claims 1, 4, and 13, as well as claims 2-3, 5-6, and 8-12 that depend variously therefrom, are not anticipated by Carr.

Claim Rejections Under 35 U.S.C. §103(a)

Claims 7 and 14 have been rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Carr. Applicant respectfully traverses.

Claims 7 and 14 depend from amended claim 4. Thus, for at least the reasons set forth in the 102 section above, the elements of claims 7 and 14 are not taught or suggested by Carr. As such, Applicant respectfully submits that claim 7 is not obvious over Carr.

All of the rejections are herein overcome. No new matter is added by way of the present Remarks, as support is found throughout the original filed specification, claims, and drawings. Notice of Allowance is respectfully requested.

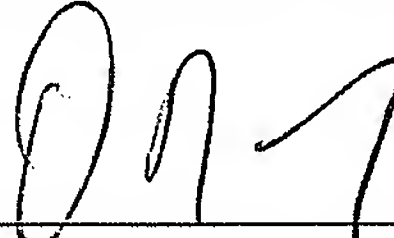
If the Examiner has any questions regarding the instantly submitted response, Applicant's attorney respectfully requests the courtesy of a telephone conference to discuss any matters in need of attention.

Applicant hereby petitions for any necessary extension of time required under 37 C.F.R. 1.136(a) or 1.136(b) which may be required for entry and consideration of the present Reply.

If there are any additional charges with respect to this response or otherwise, please charge them to Deposit Account No. 06-1130 maintained by Applicants' attorney.

Respectfully submitted,

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